Environmental pressure on ecosystem

1829. SHRI MAHENDRA MOHAN: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the ecosystems such as riversheds, mangroves, coastal zones, forests and grasslands are overburdened by environmental pressures from commercialisation excessive resources use and indiscriminate dumping of industrial and agricultural waste;

(b) if so, what Government has done to ease the situation;

(c) whether Government is considering to impose environmental cess on the polluting industries; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) and (b) Any developmental activity would affect the environment and ecosystem. In order to mitigate the same, the Government has enacted acts such as Environment (Protection) Act, 1986, Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980, Wildlife (Protection) Act 1972 and issued notifications under these to regulate activities in ecologically fragile areas such as Coastal Zones, Management of Hazardous Substances, established a procedure for according environment and forest clearance which *inter alia* provides for examination of use of resources such as land, water and energy, constituted authority to regulate ground water use.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) The present Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1974, and Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1981 provides adequate powers to the competent authorities to prevent and control the pollution and mitigate the same and if necessary take punitive actions. In addition Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1979, provides for collection of 'water cess' for water abstracted.

Impact of global warming

1830. SHRI RAJKUMAR DHOOT: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that global warming is causing quick melting of ice to deplete natural resources and drying up of underground water;

(b) if so, the details thereof and its impact on the conditions; and

(c) the steps which are proposed to be taken to reserve the process?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) to (c) According to the information furnished by the Ministry of Water Resources, some of the studies project that the Climate Change will effect the water resources of the various rivers of the country mostly because of increase in the glacier melt. As per the studies conducted by the Geological Survey of India if the present scenario of the receding glaciers is accelerated, there may be some reduction in the river discharge. It has been further indicated that the major part of the river discharge is contributed by snowfall and precipitation, which is likely to go up with global warming. The continuous retreat of glaciers may lead to marginal shortage of water in the Himalayan rivers. Studies also indicate that the major part of the glacier melt run off is released during June-September